

Report for 2005PA45B: Private Water System Education and Outreach

Publications

- **Unclassified:**
 - Clemens, Stephanie, Bryan Swistock and William Sharpe. 2006 (submitted). The Master Well Owner Network: Volunteers Educating Pennsylvania Well Owners, Journal of Extension.

Report Follows

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS AND SIGNIFICANCE

Satellite Program

A 1.5 hour Safe Drinking Water satellite program was delivered on May 3, 2005 to 25 downlink sites around the state. The program was presented by Penn State water quality experts including Dr. William Sharpe, Bryan Swistock and Stephanie Clemens. This program included approximately 15 minutes of pre-recorded information at a well and spring site.

Forty-four Master Well Owner Network (MWON) volunteers helped to publicize and sponsor the program at the 25 downlink sites around the state. These volunteers attended the program and answered questions from homeowner attendees at each site. A total of 142 well owners attended the program at the 25 sites.

Evaluation from the satellite program indicated that 100% of attendees found the program good, very good or excellent. Nearly all (96%) indicated that they would take an action to better protect their drinking water as a result of attending the program.

130 videotape copies of the satellite program were distributed throughout the state to each county extension office, interested MWON volunteers and various water resources professionals. Volunteers and extension educators used the tape in programs for private well owners and the tapes were loaned to various interested homeowners. Overall, MWON volunteers educated 6,483 homeowners with private wells in fiscal year 2005 and the videotape was an important tool in this education. Another 29,252 homeowners were educated through newsletters, news articles, and TV interviews. A follow-up survey of homeowners that interacted with volunteers during fiscal year 2005 determined that 97% felt the interaction was beneficial, 92% learned at least one new idea for private water system management and 82% had taken an action to better protect their drinking water supply.

Master Well Owner Statewide Conference

A statewide conference of Master Well Owner volunteers was held on Saturday, September 24, 2005 at the Ramada Inn in State College, PA. This conference was intended to increase the capacity of trained volunteers by creating increased knowledge about recommended topics. The all-day conference included one hour presentations from various experts on the following topics:

- Effective Public Outreach
- Well Grouting
- Groundwater and Public Health
- Septic System Management

A Resource Session was also held to allow volunteers to observe equipment and displays and interact with experts related to water treatment, well drilling, groundwater flow models and general water quality questions.

A total of 68 MWON volunteers from 33 counties attended the conference. Seventy-one percent rated the conference as excellent and 29% rated it very good. All presentations at the conference were rated as very helpful by 63 to 95% of attendees. All attendees indicated that they would like the conference repeated annually.

STUDENTS SUPPORTED (name, major, degree)

Leonard McNeal, Environmental Pollution Control, M.S., Summer 2005

PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION TRANSFER ACTIVITIES

- Master Well Owner Network volunteer training workshop, Northwest Region, March 5, 2005, Franklin, PA.
- Master Well Owner Network volunteer training workshop, Susquehanna Region, April 2, 2005, Williamsport, PA.
- Safe Drinking Water Clinic, Statewide Satellite Program, May 3, 2005, 25 downlink sites at extension locations.
- Update on Master Well Owner Network, Pennsylvania Groundwater Association, Summer Field Conference, June 10, 2005, Rock Springs, PA.
- Master Well Owner Network Statewide Conference, September 24, 2005, Ramada Inn, State College, PA.
- Private Water System Management and Master Well Owner Network. December 7, 2005, PA Geologists Meeting, Indiana, PA.
- Master Well Owner Expansion into the Delmarva Peninsula, Mid-Atlantic Regional Water Program, December 9, 2005, University of Maryland Eastern Shore.
- Educating Rural Homeowners in Pennsylvania, One Well at a Time (Poster Presentation), National Ground Water Association, 2005 Annual Conference, December 13-14, 2006, Cobb County, Georgia
- The Master Well Owner Network: Working with PGWA to Educate Rural Homeowners, Pennsylvania Ground Water Association, 2006 Winter Conference, January 26, 2006, Grantsville, PA.
- The Master Well Owner Network: Educating Rural Homeowners One Well at a Time, USDA 2006 National Water Quality Conference, February 5 9, 2006, San Antonio, TX.
- Master Well Owner Network Regional Coordinators training, February 17, 2006, State College, PA.

AWARDS

- National Ground Water Association, 2005 Ground Water Protection Award (outstanding science, engineering, or innovation in the area of protecting ground water). Presented at National Ground Water Expo, Cobb County, Georgia, December 2005.
- Pennsylvania Ground Water Association, 2005 award in appreciation of support to PGWA.